American Kitefliers Association

E: convention@aka.kite.org

INTRODUCTION TO THE AMERICAN KITEFLIERS ASSOCIATION:

The American Kitefliers Association (AKA) is a non-profit corporation founded to "educate the public in the art, history, technology, and practice of building and flying kites; to advance kiting, its joys and its values, in all nations". We now enjoy a membership of over 2800. Our largest population centers are in coastal areas, with the East Coast and Oregon/Washington having the highest density of members. Kitefliers are warm friendly people who love to share both the art and sport aspects of their passion.

The AKA Convention is an exciting event that attracts 150-225 registered attendees and provides unique entertainment to the local community. Our annual gathering includes large outdoor demonstrations, national level competitions, and indoor workshops and programs. Our convention is a five-day event traditionally held in late September or early October. Sites rotate through east, central and west locations (2011 was an "east" year).

SUMMARY:

Location:

- Geographically convenient
- Affordable hotel accommodations for registrants**
- Available restaurants
- Shuttle services from a major airport a plus.

** Because hotel accommodations are made by registrants instead of through a rooming list, it is impossible for the Association to guarantee participants will stay at the designated convention hotel. However, convention analysis history tells us that participants PREFER the convention hotel, but the bottom line for them is affordability.

Hotel contracts that do not contain attrition clauses or tie room guarantees or complimentary meeting space to food and beverage purchases will be given extra consideration. The Association currently spends \$10-15,000 on F&B during the week, excluding tax and gratuity.

Flying Fields:

- Ideally we would like four fields 360' x 360', with additional open space around them. If that is not available, our minimum requirements are: Space for 1 field of 300' x 300', 2 additional fields of 250'x250', plus additional open space.
- Open area
- Clear of obstructions and wind turbulence. That is, not surrounded by trees and buildings
- Permission to drive temporary stakes, and a map showing sprinkler systems.

Banquet Facilities and Meeting Space:

- Two banquets (150-225people)
- One reception (150-200people)
- Meeting and exhibition rooms
- Bag Raffle room
- Administrative space for registration and storage
- Administrative space for auction and storage
- Indoor kite flying -- large room with ceiling height of at least 25 ft.
- Wireless Internet access should be available throughout the facility

LOCATION CONSIDERATIONS:

Locations must be geographically central to a large percentage of the Association members. Our experience has shown this is a significant factor affecting the number of attendees. A major airport must be within a two-hour drive.

Affordable hotel accommodations and restaurant facilities for the 150-225 registered attendees. Hotels that provide shuttle service from the nearest major airport are a plus.

Locations with the outdoor venue within walking distance of the indoor venue and lodging will be given a strong preference. Travel times and cost of shuttle service become important issues for sites that are not within walking distance.

An average wind speed of 4 - 12 miles per hour for the September / October time frame is desired. Seasonal chance of precipitation should be below 25%.

We require no FAA flight restrictions below 500 feet for kites. This can be an issue within 5 miles of an airport.

Areas with a strong local kite-flying club are advantageous. You can research clubs in your area on the AKA website, www.aka.kite.org/resources

OUTDOORS ACTIVITIES

Competitions and Exhibitions: For our outdoor activities we ideally need an area large enough to mark out four 360 ft x 360 ft fields (or see the minimums listed above) and still have space for spectators. This area needs to be clear of wind obstructions. It must be possible for the space to be reserved for the Conventions exclusive use for the entire week. The use of a powered sound system must also be permitted. The outdoor venue is the most important factor in choosing where we select to go. Please first send details about your proposed location prior to doing any other work. A set of Google map coordinates is all that is needed. Once your site has been reviewed and approved, you can then proceed to finalize the rest of your proposal.

Lunches: Food vendors adjacent to outdoor venue or the option to bring in food vendors to provide lunch for participants. Permanent or portable restrooms are necessary.

A lighted-kite night fly is included in some years, usually utilizing the competition flying fields.

INDOOR ACTIVITIES:

Auction and Award Banquets: The Convention has two banquets for the attendees, the Auction on Friday night and the Awards banquet on Saturday night. Each menu must provide options for our vegetarian and gluten-free members.

The auction banquet may be a sit down or buffet style. To facilitate the auction activities a substantial amount of space beyond just seating the attendees is required. Extra tables for auction items and facilities for processing auction sales are needed, including Wi-Fi for credit card processing. Because of set-up time for the auction items, access to the room is desired starting in the morning of Friday. The room must be securable. In addition to the loud auction, there is a silent auction that requires 30-50 undraped banquet tables. The silent auction precedes the loud auction, but will continue throughout the loud auction. The room for the silent auction can be the same as loud, or adjacent. It too needs to be securable. A podium and sound system is required.

The Awards banquet is traditionally a sit down meal, but can be a buffet. Some space to hang kites is desirable. Three hours of lift usage is desirable. Table space on the stage is needed to display trophies. Additional table space in the room, to display smaller kites and photographs is required. A multimedia presentation accompanies the awards and requires a screen and pc projector near the stage that is viewable by all attendees. Podium and sound system are required.

All indoor activities are non-smoking. A designated smoking area that can hear the banquet proceedings is desirable but not mandatory.

Workshops / Exhibits / Meeting Rooms:

Opening Reception: This gathering on the first night of the convention needs a reception hall for 150-200 guests with a cash bar and a few extra tables. Appetizers are normally served. A podium and sound system are nice to have but not required.

Workshop Rooms: On Tuesday – Saturday morning's seminars are offered. Three seminar rooms each morning should be available and seat approximately 30 - 50 each. At least, two of the rooms need to have tables for participants and set up classroom style. A screen should be available for one of the rooms.

Challenge Night Rooms: Two – three rooms (usually the same as the workshop rooms) are used for indoor contests (i.e. Miniature Kite and Pin Collectors Challenges). Two of the rooms need tables for displaying items and chairs for spectators. Challenge night is traditionally on Thursday evening. A cash bar and a few extra tables in a nearby lobby are optional.

Fly Market: Booth spaces for retail venders, which should hold 10 booths (10x10 foot). High ceilings are preferred. The room should be available the full week, however Wednesday – Saturday is the minimum. This room must be securable.

Bag Raffle: This room should be available the full week, however Tuesday –Saturday is the minimum. The room must be securable. This room needs 30-50 tables, undraped. We also need permission and access to use a ladder and to hang items on the wall with blue painters tape.

Art Gallery: The room for the Kite Art Gallery must be available at least four continuous days but the whole week is preferable. High ceilings are a nice bonus. This room must be securable

Indoor Kite Flying: Yes we fly indoors and we don't want a fan. Ultra light kites that can be flown by simply walking at a slow pace are used indoors. A banquet size room with at least 25-foot ceilings is required. In the past we have used banquet halls, gymnasiums and even an indoor soccer field. Availability for the week is nice but not necessary. Indoor competition is usually held on Tuesday evening, with practice time made available before the competition. If at all possible the air conditioning should be turned off during the practice time and competition.

Registration and Auction Receiving: Two rooms are needed for registration and auction receiving. These rooms must be securable. The registration room requires Wi-Fi for credit card processing and must be available from Monday – Sunday. The auction receiving room must be available Monday – Friday.

General Business Meeting: A room with seating for 150 a platform with tables and seating for 22, podium and sound system. The general meeting has traditionally been held on Wednesday evening.

Board of Directors Meeting: A large board meeting room capable of seating 22 at a single table is required. Timing of this meeting has varied but it is usually held early in the week. This meeting has been held on Tuesday morning from 8 am to noon the last several years.

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Kite Makers Structural Judging: a banquet size room on Wednesday afternoon (traditionally) is used for judging part of the kite makers competition. This room needs to be primarily open space, with some chairs around the edges and a couple of tables. This is an **optional** room, as this activity can also be done on the field., in the workshop rooms or the hallways.

SUBMITTING A REQUEST:

Requests for consideration as an AKA Convention site should be submitted to the President of the association. The email address is president@aka.kite.org. Providing as much information as possible is important. As primarily a volunteer organization, we do not have the luxury to investigate first hand every site suggested. A local AKA member or kite club is helpful in evaluating sites.

Please submit your outdoor site plan for review and approval prior to doing any other work.

At this time it is the policy of the association to rotate across the country with an East Coast, Central and West Coast location pattern. This may affect which year your site will be considered. In 2011 our convention was held in Wildwood NJ. In 2012, it will be in Enid OK. For 2013, we prefer a west coast location, but non coastal sites will also be considered.